

LISTING OF AND AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A comfort grip for a shaft, comprising:

a tubular member formed of a closed cell resilient polymer material core; and

a water resistant coating on a first side of said core;

an ingrained texture on a second side of said core;

said comfort grip being initially in the form of a rectangular piece of material, comprising joining portions along two opposite sides of the rectangular piece, said joining portions being connected to form the tubular member; and

connecting means for releasably connecting said joining portions, so that said comfort grip may be releasably positioned on said shaft;

said comfort grip being sized so as to be slightly stretched when positioned on a shaft.

2. (canceled).

3. (canceled).

4. (original) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein the resilient polymer core is formed of a rubber.

5. (original) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein the coating is formed of a nylon.

6. (original) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein the coating is formed of an ultraviolet resistant flexible material.

7. (canceled)

8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) The comfort grip of claim ~~of claim~~ 1, further comprising end bands disposed only at ends of said tubular members.

10. (original) The comfort grip of claim 9, wherein said end bands comprise a stretchable material folded so as to have a first portion along an inner periphery of said tubular member and a second portion along an outer periphery of said tubular member.

11. (original) The comfort grip of claim 1, in combination with a shaft, said shaft being that of an oar or paddle.

12. (original) The combination of claim 11, wherein said oar is configured for use in paddling.

13. (original) The combination of claim 11, further comprising a second comfort grip on said shaft, said comfort grips being positioned on said shaft so that each hand of a user may grip one of said comfort grips during paddling.

14. (currently amended) A method for forming a comfort grip for a shaft, comprising:

providing a rectangular piece of stretchable material;
and

releasably connecting two opposite sides of said rectangular piece of material to from a tubular member, said tubular member being sized so as to stretch around said shaft when a portion of said shaft is disposed within said tubular member;

wherein said connecting is done by providing at least one of:

a. stitches for joining said opposite sides to one another;

b. a lace through openings in portions of said material along said sides;

c. a zipper having a side along each of said joining portions; and

d. a set of hook and loop closures on opposite ones of said joining portions.

15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, further comprising providing end bands formed of a stretchable material disposed only along ends of said tubular member.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein providing said end bands comprises:

positioning said bands with a first portion along an inner periphery of said tubular member and a second portion along an outer periphery of said tubular member; and

fastening said end bands in place.

18. (original) The method of claim 17, wherein said end bands are positioned by sewing the end bands to said tubular member.

19. (currently amended) A method for placing a comfort grip on a shaft comprising:

providing a comfort grip including a tubular member formed of a closed cell resilient polymer material core, and a water resistant coating on each side of said core; an ingrained texture on a second side of said core; said comfort grip being initially in the form of a rectangular piece of material, comprising joining portions along two opposite sides of the rectangular piece, said joining portions being connected to form the tubular member; and connecting means for releasably connecting said joining portions, so that said comfort grip may be releasably positioned on said shaft; said comfort grip being sized so as to be slightly stretched when positioned on a shaft; and

placing said comfort grip on said shaft by at least one of:

a. sliding said comfort grip onto said shaft;

- b. lacing said comfort grip to said shaft with a lace extending through openings opening in said tubular member;
- c. closing a zipper, said zipper having a side along each of said joining portions; and
- d. closing a set of hook and loop closures on opposite ones of said joining portions.

20. (new) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein said connecting means comprises stitching along edges of said sides to connect said joining portions.

21. (new) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein said connecting means comprises a lace disposed in openings in said joining portions.

22. (new) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein said connecting means comprises a zipper having a side along each of said joining portions.

23. (new) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein said connecting means comprises a set of hook and loop closures on opposite ones of said joining portions.

24. (new) The comfort grip of claim 1, wherein said connecting means comprises a series of staples along said joining portions.